

3/18/04 Alliance Boosts HSU Energy Savings

Expanding Humboldt State University's ongoing energy conservation drive, the prominent national environmental organization Alliance to Save Energy will set up a pilot program on the Arcata campus.

In collaboration with HSU's Schatz Energy Research Center, the alliance will provide a paid intern to establish a "Green School" initiative that will supplement the university's existing conservation measures.

HSU is among the first universities chosen by the alliance to expand its Green School program from K-12 to the plane of higher education. The Schatz Center will oversee integration of the program with its multiple energy-saving efforts.

The center currently is accepting student applications to train as volunteer laboratory docents. Plans call for the trainees to assist with campus energy efficiency projects, among other responsibilities.

Also in consultation with Schatz, HSU's Environmental Resources Engineering Department has purchased a campuswide license to use federal energy modeling software for buildings. The U.S. Energy Department software is already in use to model potential energy retrofits to the ERE Department's campus home in House 18.

ERE has acquired several energy monitoring instruments on the Schatz Center's recommendation.

These tools will be used initially for the House 18 audit, then by students to survey other campus facilities.

An intensive, week-long summer course will be offered under HSU's Extended Education program to train students to perform energy audits of homes, businesses and institutional buildings.

A professional energy auditor trainer, an HSU graduate who works for a utility company, will teach the course, cosponsored by Schatz and HSU's Faculty-Initiated Economic Development Project.

The objective is to deploy students who have completed the training course to perform campus energy audits in the upcoming academic year.

The Schatz Center's conservation drive to date has:

- Conducted preliminary energy audits of its own facility at University Annex and House 18, identifying needs and challenges that may arise in campuswide audits. These include ascertaining methods to collect meaningful data and minimizing the intrusiveness of audits on faculty, staff and students.
- Resulted in collaboration with students of introduction to design and environmental science practicum courses who are performing class projects relevant to campus energy use. The projects include an in-depth energy audit of House 18, with analysis of proposed energy-efficiency measures; a study of energy use by refrigerators in the science complex; and design of a campus energy awareness and outreach campaign.

Schatz research so far indicates that the most-productive conservation measures include energy-saving behavioral changes in the campus community: replacement of plug-in equipment with energy-saving equivalents, such as space heaters, halogen torchieres and refrigerators; installation of

external devices that automatically power down equipment like vending machines and water coolers; consolidating underutilized equipment like refrigerators; and activating low-power mode settings on all computers and office equipment.

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